

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02 PRS-01 IO-03

DPW-01 AID-10 RSR-01 /080 W
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R 201147Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4904

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13150

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 SIT REP, JULY 20

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON JULY 20 INFO CINCPAC USDAO
SAIGON USSAG NKP RTAFB REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE

NHA TRANG 712

1. SECURITY SITUATION: THE THIRTY INCIDENTS REPORTED OVER PAST
48-HOUR PERIOD WERE CONCENTRATED MAINLY IN KONTUM AND BINHINH,
WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE REGION GENERALLY QUIET; 13 INCIDENTS
REPORTED IN KONTUM, 10 IN BINH DINH, THREE IN PHU YEN, TWO IN
PLEIKU, AND ONE EACH IN QUANG DUC AND BINH THUAN. THEY INCLUDED:
16 ENEMY ATTACKS BY FIRE, SIX MININGS, FOUR GROUND ATTACKS, TWO
SUCCESSFUL RVNAF MECHANICAL AMBUSH. CASUALTIES: VC/NVA: 23 KIA,
26 WEAPBYS AND NUMEROUS HAND GRENADES CAPTURED, TWO BUNKERS
DESTROYED; RVNAF: SIX KIA, 40 WIA. ONE CIVILIAN WAS KILLED BY
ENEMY SHELLING OF A BINH DINH HAMLET. THIRTY-ONE OF THE RVNAF'S
WIA'S AND TWO OF ITS KIA'S OCCURRED IN KONTUM ACTIONS, AS OPPOSED
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TO ONLY EIGHT ENEMY KIA THERE. CLEARING SKIES IN NORTHERN

HIGHLANDS ALLOWED VNAF TO FLY 36 "TRAINING AND REHEARSAL" MISSIONS OVER KONTUM; 12 MORE WERE FLOWN IN BINH DINH.

2. CONSUL PLEIKU/KONTUM REPORTS THAT MR 2 COMMANDER, MAJ. GEN. TOAN, ARRIVED IN KONTUM ON AFTERNOON OF JULY 18, REPORTEDLY INTENDING TO STAY FOR SEVERAL DAYS (SAIGON 12970, PART VI, PARA 2). HOWEVER, HE LEFT THE MORNING OF JULY 19 WITHOUT HAVING, AS HAD BEEN EXPECTED, SACKED A NUMBER OF UNIT COMMANDERS, UP TO REGIMENTAL LEVEL. CONSUL BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT ANY SUCH CHANGES -- HAD THEY BEEN MADE -- WOULD HAVE BEEN PURELY COSMETIC AND WOULD NOT HAVE ENHANCED ARVN PROSPECTS OF RETAKING TRUNG NGHIA AND POLEI KONG ANY TIME SOON.

3. FIGHTING ON GROUND IN KONTUM REMAINED ESSENTIALLY AT PREVIOUS LEVELS DURING THE PERIOD; PRINCIPAL CHANGE WAS ROTATION OF SOME ARVN UNITS.

4. MORALE AMONG OFFICERS INVOLVED IN THE KONTUM FIGHTING APPEARS TO BE DROPPING BECAUSE OF THEIR UNITS' LACK OF SUCCESS AND CONSEQUENT CRITICISM FROM MR 2 HEADQUARTERS. THE TROOPS ALSO SEEM TO HAVE LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THE EFFORTS REQUIRED TO MAKE FURTHER ADVANCES.

5. RICE PRICE PROBLEM CONTINUES TO EXACERBATE OTHER DIFFICULTIES (NHA TRANG 706). POL SHORTAGES REMAIN SERIOUS AND NOW AMMUNITION SUPPLIES ARE COMING INTO QUESTION. FRIENDLY FORCES IN KONTUM ARE AT PRESENT BEING LIMITED TO TOTAL OF 500 ARTILLERY ROUNDS A DAY. THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN FIRING APPROXIMATELY 3,000 A DAY.

6. QUANG DUC: PROV REP QUANG DUC, AFTER TALK WITH RF BATTALION COMMANDER IN "OLD BU PRANG" AREA, REPORTS THAT IN PAST FIVE WEEKS NVA FORCES IN THAT PART OF KIEN DUC DISTRICT HAVE FORCED RF TO ABANDON THREE POSITIONS IN THE AREA AND HAVE THUS EXPANDED THEIR TERRITORY BY ABOUT 12 SQUARE KM. ENEMY IS NOW USING CAPTURED M-79 GRENADE LAUNCHERS AND AMMUNITION TO FIRE NIGHTLY, CLOSE-IN HARASSMENT AND INTERDICTION FIRE AROUND THEIR POSITIONS. QUANG DUC PROVINCE CHIEF BELIEVES (FROM STUDY OF AERIAL PHOTOS) THAT CIVILIAN POPULATION LIVING NEAR CAMBODIAN BORDER IN BU PHANG AREA HAS INCREASED FROM 200
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OR 300 TO APPROXIMATELY 1,000 IN RECENT WEEKS. HE BELIEVES THAT NEWCOMERS ARE CAMBODIAN MONTAGNARDS WHO HAVE MOVED OR WERE BROUGHT IN BY NVA. PROV REP NOTES THAT "OLD BU PRANG" IS THE ONLY POINT ON MR2/CAMBODIA BORDER WHERE GVN STILL HAS ANY PRESENCE.

7. BINH THUAN: THE RAILROAD IN BINH THUAN PROVINCE CONTINUES TO SUFFER FROM THE ATTENTIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS. AT 2200 ON

JULY 19, AN ALREADY DAMAGED RAILROAD BRIDGE (AT AN 846248)
WAS FURTHER DAMAGED BY AN EXPLOSION,. SIGNED TEARE
UNQUOTE MARTIN

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NNN

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